

§ 58-92-5. Findings.

The General Assembly finds:

- (1) Cigarettes are the leading cause of fire deaths in this State and the nation.
- (2) Each year in the United States, 700-900 persons are killed due to cigarette fires, and 3,000 are injured in fires ignited by cigarettes, while in this State, there were 2,916 cigarette-related fires in North Carolina during the period 2001-2006.
- (3) A high proportion of the victims of cigarette fires are nonsmokers, including senior citizens and young children.
- (4) Cigarette-caused fires result in billions of dollars of property losses and damages in the United States and millions of dollars in this State.
- (5) Cigarette fires unnecessarily jeopardize firefighters and result in avoidable emergency response costs for municipalities.
- (6) In 2004, New York State implemented a cigarette fire-safety regulation requiring cigarettes sold in that state to meet a fire-safety performance standard; in 2005, Vermont and California enacted cigarette fire-safety laws directly incorporating New York's regulation into statute; and, in 2006, Illinois, New Hampshire, and Massachusetts joined these states in enacting such laws.
- (7) In 2005, Canada implemented the New York State fire-safety standard contained in the other state laws, becoming the first nation to have a cigarette fire-safety standard.
- (8) New York State's cigarette fire-safety standard is based upon decades of research by the National Institute of Standards and Technology, congressional research groups, and private industry.
- (9) This cigarette fire-safety standard minimizes costs to the State and minimally burdens cigarette manufacturers, distributors, and retail sellers, and, therefore, should become law in this State.
- (10) It is therefore fitting and proper for this State to adopt the cigarette fire-safety standard that is in effect in New York State to reduce the likelihood that cigarettes will cause fires and result in deaths, injuries, and property damages. (2007-451, s. 1.)